

NSC BRIEFING

27 April 1960

SINO-SOVIET DIFFERENCES

- I. USSR and Communist China for past few weeks have been conducting a unique debate in their public pronouncements.
  - A. Arguments stated in usual Communist ideological language--full of quotes and counter-quotes from Lenin--with neither side publicly admitting that it is arguing with the other.
  - B. Main points at issue are:
    1. Inevitability of war. Chinese say it is, but bloc will win. Soviets say modern weapons have made war out of date, and that Communism growing strong enough to overcome capitalism peacefully "by example."
    2. Peaceful intentions of West. Chinese claim Western diplomatic activity before Summit masks increased military preparations, but as US now deterred by Soviet power from launching general war, imperialists plan limited wars instead. Soviets profess to believe US now seeking peace.
    3. Desirability of peaceful coexistence. Chinese see US weakening, approaching "final crisis" of capitalism; therefore, bloc should accelerate disintegration of West by aggressive policy. Soviets believe such policy would slow disintegration as West would rally in face of common enemy.

C. Actually, Chinese apparently fear period of detente which Soviets are seeking will make it difficult to justify their aggressive and violently anti-US foreign policy. Chinese feel negotiations leading to acceptance of status quo in Europe would encourage permanent world acceptance of status quo in Taiwan Strait.

II. In this context we are watching Taiwan Strait closely, as we cannot discount possibility Chinese might attempt to pressure Khrushchev by some military move in the offshore island area.

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B. At present, however, Watch Committee concludes that: Although the Chinese Nationalists have shown concern over the possibility of an attack on the Offshore Islands, the Chinese Communists do not appear to intend major offensive military action in the immediate future. They have, however, maintained their capabilities to bring heavy pressure on the Taiwan Strait area and could initiate an attack on the Offshore Islands with little or no warning.

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